

1998 Partners

Alcohol and Drug Information
Clearinghouse / Nebraska
Council to Prevent Alcohol
and Drug Abuse

Lincoln Council on Alcoholism
and Drugs

Mothers Against Drunk
Driving, Nebraska

Munroe-Meyer
Institute/Department of
Pediatrics, UNMC

Nebraska Academy of Family
Practitioners

Nebraska Association of
Hospitals and Health
Systems

Nebraska Chapter of
American Academy of
Pediatrics

Nebraska Health and Human
Services System

Nebraska Nurses
Association

Nebraska School Nurses
Association

Nebraska Office of Highway
Safety

PRIDE- Omaha, Inc.

PROJECT ACCESS

Project Extra Mile

Regional Council of Child and
Adolescent Psychiatry

Region III Behavioral Health
Services

Region VI Behavioral Health
Administration

Rural Region V Prevention
Center

Tobacco Free Nebraska
Coalition

CHILD HEALTH MONTH

Drugs

- ★ Almost 3 out of 10 children were offered drugs in 1997.¹
- ★ Only half of the 4th graders surveyed knew that beer, wine or liquor is a drug, compared to 87% who knew that marijuana is a drug.³
- ★ Children in grades 4-6 think that the most important reason for using alcohol and marijuana is to "fit in with others", followed closely by a desire "to feel older."⁸
- ★ Children in 1997 were more tolerant of drugs than in previous years. In 1997, one-third of children felt that "everyone tries drugs sometimes" a significant increase from 1996 (29%) and 1993 (28%). In 1997, 16% agreed that "smoking marijuana is ok sometimes," significantly more than 12% in 1993.¹

Alcohol

- ★ Early alcohol use is associated with subsequent alcohol dependence and related health problems.⁸
- ★ Generally, the risk for alcohol dependence decreases by 14% with increasing year of age drinking onset.⁶
- ★ Of students who reported ever having had a drink of alcohol, 45.4% reported having their first drink at age 9 or younger.⁴
- ★ One out of three 4th graders believe that drinking is a "big problem" in their age group.⁵
- ★ About one out of seven 4th graders already have consumed alcohol to the point of intoxication.⁵
- ★ Only 44% of 6th graders polled think alcohol should be called a drug.⁸
- ★ Over 50% of 6th graders report peer pressure to try beer, wine or liquor. 47% report peer pressure to try wine coolers.⁸
- ★ Alcohol use by the end of the 6th grade was reported by 30% of 8th graders.²
- ★ The first occasion of drunkenness is most likely to occur in 7th through 10th grade. Some 8% of students surveyed reported having been drunk by the end of the 6th grade.²

Tobacco

- ★ Smokeless tobacco tends to be initiated quite early. 3.5% of 8th graders report their first use of smokeless tobacco in 4th grade.²
- ★ One-fourth of surveyed high school student smokers reported having smoked their first whole cigarette at age 10 or younger.⁴
- ★ Almost 60% of 6th graders report peer pressure to try cigarettes.⁸
- ★ 73.3% of surveyed middle school student smokers reported having smoked their first whole cigarette at age 12 or younger.⁴
- ★ Peak ages for initiation of cigarette smoking are in the 6th and 7th grades (24%).²

Marijuana

- ★ Children's exposure to marijuana doubled from 1993 to 1997.¹
- ★ Children in 1997, were more likely to want to experiment with marijuana. 14% agreed that they would "like to try pot just once to see what it is like."¹
- ★ Of all surveyed Nebraska middle school students, 16.1% reported having used marijuana. Of those reporting marijuana use, 17.4% report first using the drug at 9 years or younger.⁴
- ★ 33% of 6th graders report peer pressure to try marijuana.⁸
- ★ Marijuana was tried by 5.3% of students surveyed by the end of the 6th grade.²
- ★ The highest initiation rates for marijuana are seen in grades 9-11.²

Inhalants

- ★ Children as young as 4th graders who begin to use volatile solvents also will start experimenting with other drugs, usually alcohol and marijuana.⁷
- ★ Inhalant use tends to occur early, with peak initiation rates in grades 6 through 9.²
- ★ Among the 8th graders in 1995, 7% had already tried inhalants by the end of 5th grade.²

1. The Partnership Attitude Tracking Study, 1998. 2. National Survey Results on Drug Use from The Monitoring the Future Study, 1975-1995, Volume 1 Secondary School Students, 1996. 3. Weekly Reader National Survey on Drugs and Drinking (Middletown, CT: Field Publications, Spring 1987). 4. Youth Risk Behavior Study, 1995. 5. American Academy of Pediatrics, Alcohol: Your Child and Drugs, 1991. 6. NIH News Release, January 1998: National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, National Institutes of Health. 7. Biauvas, F. "Volatile Solvent Abuse: Trends and Patterns," NIDA. Research Monograph 129: Inhalant Abuse: A Volatile Research Agenda, 1993. 8. What Works: Schools Without Drugs, 1992.